

IN FOCUS

The Official Publication
of the Jamaican
Canadian Association

August 1997

SERVING THE BLACK AND CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY FOR OVER 35 YEARS

Renovation Plans Delayed

By Billroy Powell

The Jamaican Canadian Association renovation plans have been put on hold- indefinitely- as a result of a last minute appeal against the recent rezoning of the property.

Mr. Santo Peluso from the Ritz Banquet Hall, has filed an appeal with the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) objecting to our rezoning that was approved by North York City Council in May of this year. Grounds cited for the appeal is insufficient parking, both on and off site "within the radius specified in the general rezoning by-law of the City of North York".

During the hearing of the rezoning application, the securing of additional parking spaces was a prerequisite in getting either the North York Planning committee or City Council



JCA President
Herman Stewart,
receives \$1000
cheque from
outgoing
Jamaica Consul
General
Margarietta
St. Juste
generated from
a community
tribute to her.

approvals. Consequently the JCA signed a 10-year lease with one of its neighbours to use their parking lot so as to meet the requirements stipulated by the City's zoning by-law.

The JCA's position is that "the appeal is frivolous and we will be asking the OMB to dismiss the appeal before it goes to formal hearing" said JCA President Herman Stewart. JCA has asked MPPs (Alvin Curling, Isabel Bassett and Tony Silipo) to make representation to the OMB to speed up the case.

The JCA hopes that the OMB will agree that the appeal is frivolous and should be thrown out without any formal hearing.

The OMB process takes between one and three years. However, the JCA is hoping that a deci-

sion can come sooner than that.

The JCA has already hired a project manager who is ready to proceed with renovating the building as soon as he is given the go ahead.

Inside Highlights

JCA Triumphant..... Pg. 2

Member Report..... Pg.5

Fun for kids..... Pg. 6

Who is Allyson Collymore?.Pg. 8

QUARTERLY GENERAL MEETING

Sunday, August 24, 1997

2 p.m. to 5 p.m.

JCA Centre

995 Arrow Road

Phone (416) 746-5772

The Jamaican Canadian Association

35 Years of service and
commitment

JCA will Triumph!!

Our history is predominantly one of faith and resilience testing. What ever we have achieved is not without a long and persistent struggle.

Once more we are faced with a challenge to establish our right to be here. The owners of the Ritz, a neighbouring banquet hall, decided to appeal to the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) the thirteen to one vote of approval by the North York City Council for the JCA's rezoning application.

The JCA, with the support of the wider community, had to fight attempts made earlier by several of its neighbours and the local coun-

cillor to block the effort to rezone 995 Arrow Road. During the hearing of the JCA's application, our main opponents, the Ritz owners said that if their concern of inadequate parking spaces was addressed, then they would withdraw their objection to the application. As a result, the JCA sought and secure in excess of 200 parking spaces from some of its neighbours in order to appease the owners of Ritz Banquet Hall.

The Ritz owners in their appeal to the OMB specified three reasons for their latest objection, which are: (1)there is insufficient parking provided on site, (2)there is insufficient off-site parking provided for within the radius specified in the general zoning by-law of the City of North York and (3) the subject premises are not of sufficient size to permit the operation of the specified intended use of the premises.

The irony in all of this is that the Ritz premises doesn't have as much on-site parking spaces as the JCA, even though its parking needs are similar to those of the JCA. Besides, the JCA need for extra parking will be confined mostly to weekends, while for the Ritz, it will depend on how often it gets business which can be everyday, because it is operated solely as a banquet hall.

The JCA centre will be used primarily as a place for youth, seniors and other members of our community to congregate in order to fulfil their social and cultural needs.

For the past 35 years, the JCA has been providing leadership and advocacy for the Black community. Many battles have been fought and won by the JCA.

We will treat the current situation with the owners of the Ritz banquet hall as another battle which needs to be fought and won. No amount of delaying tactics and intimidation will deter the JCA from fulfilling its dreams. Therefore, we are appealing once again to our members and friends to join us in the struggle to show those who seek to marginalize us that their effort is futile.

Summer Fun

By Michelle Allick
ISAP Counsellor

Every Wednesday from July 9 to August 27, 1997, the Caribbean Youth Project is offering a summer program to Caribbean youth who have recently arrived in Canada. The youth will be participating in activities such as job shadowing with employers, visits to the Six Nations Reserve, the Black museum in Collingwood and tour of the Scarborough courts.

This will give youth the opportunity to learn more about their new community, learn more about the public transit system, how to find a job, and to travel outside of the city.

This program was planned in partnership with the Jamaican Canadian Association, COSTI,
See Fun, Pg. 8

JCA to Prepare Private Members Bill

By Herman Stewart,
President

We have hired a project manager to supervise the renovations of our Centre. His name is Martin Forskin, a Jamaican with more than 20 years experience in construction management. He is currently working with the architect to prepare our building permit application.

The officers of the Board will be meeting with representatives from the Royal Bank of Canada concerning refinancing our mortgage. This will enable us to get the money needed to start the renovations, once the rezoning matter is settled.

We have discussed the need to have our property exempted from property taxes with Mayor Mel Lastman. He has assured us that he will support our application. We are preparing a private Member's Bill to submit to the Legislature. If passed by Queen's Park, the Bill then goes to North York and Metro Council. We have to act quickly because we do not know what will happen under the megacity. We are currently paying \$36,000 in property taxes per year, so you can see the urgency and importance of this move.

We wrote to Premier Harris regarding our concerns about policing and he has replied assuring us that the Solicitor General will meet with us. We are hopeful we can hold a meeting soon.

We would like to re-establish our credit union and I have asked the 2nd Vice-President, Alton Telfer, to investigate the possibility. He should have an update for us at the next membership meeting.

We are currently working to help a young woman who is being deported to Jamaica, although she is legally married to a Canadian citizen and has been in Canada for more than 11 years. We are also working on a case that involves the death of a Grenadian, while in detention.

We recently received a donation of several computers for our proposed training centre. We also received \$1000.00 donation toward our building fund from the Margarietta St. Juste function. We are in desperate need of fundraising dollars. I am urging all members to hold a fundraising event of some kind to help us fight our rezoning clause and to get the renovations underway.

I trust that you are all having an enjoyable summer and look forward to seeing you at our membership meeting on Sunday, August 24th.

JCA BINGO SCHEDULE

| Date | P.M. | Coordinators |
|----------|------|--------------|
| Aug. 5 | 7:00 | B. Carter |
| Aug. 27 | 1:00 | N.L. Bailey |
| Sept. 5 | 7:00 | M. Amiel |
| Sept. 27 | 1:00 | B. Carter |
| Oct. 3 | 7:00 | N.L. Bailey |
| Oct. 18 | 1:00 | M. Amiel |
| Nov. 14 | 7:00 | B. Carter |
| Nov. 29 | 1:00 | N.L. Bailey |
| Dec. 5 | 7:00 | M. Amiel |
| Dec. 20 | 1:00 | B. Carter |

"Love can never be found
inside of a fist!"

The JCA Violence Against Women Program

Services free and confidential.

Immediate appointments.

Contact:

Rita McLean (416) 746-5772



Sprinter extraordinaire

Ben Johnson and

dedicated JCA member

Erma Collins display

their Scarborough

Bicentennial Awards

received for

outstanding

community

involvement

JCA Programs restructured to meet community needs

By Deborah Headley
Executive Director

My first four months as the new Executive Director have been challenging, yet productive. As a first step, an internal audit was conducted. Its purpose was to identify the organization's strengths and limitations, and to evaluate to what extent the Jamaican Canadian Association was able to effectively respond to current fiscal and social changes.

The process, which is almost complete, has resulted in the restructuring of our social service programs, the building of stronger connections between our social service and community activities, and the overall strengthening of JCA.

In order to move successfully into the next century, we will need both change and stability. The changes which have occurred are the first of many which will need to be in place to address the changing needs of our community and dwindling resources. While recognizing that change is necessary to growth, JCA will maintain its efforts to bring stability to the community through its commitment to a strong tradition of community involvement and advocacy.

As result of the internal audit and subsequent program restructuring, there has been a 5% increase in clients served. Ongoing work to streamline our programs and efforts to make better use of the expertise and skills of community members have shifted our attention towards the development of volunteer co-ordination services, which will be in place by September.

ber.

We have initiated changes to the way that we deliver services to newcomers and expanded the level of involvement in immigration and multicultural issues. Two new site offices one in Scarborough with the Metro Toronto Housing Authority (Gilder) and the other in Toronto with the Parkdale Intercultural Association (Parkdale) have been opened to make our services more accessible to our clients.

We have established international ties in the areas of Immigration and Multiculturalism (Dutch Home Ministry - Holland) and child development issues (Leliebloom House - South Africa); and are in the process of creating key partnerships with other Caribbean communities in providing reception assistance.

Our participation in and co-sponsorship of an anti-violence rally at Metro Hall Square was highlighted in the July 17, 1997 issues of the Share newspaper. We anticipate continued work with the Metro Black Clergy Community

Association, the other co-sponsor, and with those agencies/groups who were present at the event.

Through donations, we are in the beginning stages of setting up our computer centre. This centre will be used to keep the Association members updated about our activities, maintain databases for education, research, and statistical purposes, and will give the wider community access to information on our programs and services. We will soon be on the Internet - Watch for us! The long term goal of the transition process is to place us in a better position to respond to the needs of the community.

The next steps will involve the ongoing consolidation of our programs services and the development of a comprehensive structure for delivering community based youth services.

To meet our commitment we need you. We require your skills, expertise, knowledge, time and effort. JCA invites you to give generously in any area or way that you can. Help us to help you and the growth of our community.



Children who won events at JCA picnic display their trophies

Member Support Crucial!!

By Alton Telfer
2nd Vice-President

So far 1997 has presented the JCA with many hurdles but fortunately we have managed to pool our resources and apply them in such a manner that all but one hurdle has been eliminated. The reference here is to the rezoning of our centre. I would like to say a special thank you to Mayor Mel Lastman and Mr. Bernie Farber of the Jewish Congress for their support throughout the rezoning process.

While we are on the subject of support, I must once again remind you that your support is crucial to our survival. The Board is expecting you to help as much as you can to move things forward.

Membership Committee Report

By Francella Moore
Membership Chair

As the new membership committee chair, I look forward to the challenges ahead with enthusiasm. It has been great, being on the Board and planning the Annual Picnic. If the beginning of my first year is any indication, I am looking forward to a successful tenure.

The picnic was a huge success. The funds generated from the trip raffle and domino games netted over \$700.00. This year's experience should serve to improve next year's event. Thanks to all those who gave donations to the trip both in time and/or gifts. We were blessed with excellent weather and an accident free trip. Hope to see you next year.

Two tables of women and men played dominos at Ontario Place dur-

ing the Jamaica Jamboree. The JCA received \$250.00 for participating. A special thanks to sponsor Denise Jones who was our sponsor for the event.

It is incumbent on every member to be supportive financially or otherwise. Here are some of the ways in which you can help: renew your membership promptly and you can also contact your employer or companies you are in contact with for tax deductible donations towards the renovation of our centre. If you make the contact and inform us, we will take it from there.

In a previous newsletter I brought to your attention the inequalities in telephone charges by Bell Canada for calls from Canada to Jamaica in relation to other countries. I haven't got any feedback but I do hope you have written to the President of Bell Canada.

The visitation group is in place. Please advise us if you have a family member or if you know of a member of the JCA who would benefit from our visits. We are also looking for more people to join the visitation group. If you are interested, please contact the membership committee.

September has been declared membership month. The JCA has chosen Saturday, October 4, 1997 from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. to appreciate its members. You are invited to come out and have some fun with us.

We are hoping to hear from all the members who have not yet

Interested in Golf? Mr. Fred Debidin, a member of the JCA, would like to start a golf training club for youth. He is prepared to finance the start-up phase. If you interested, please call the JCA and leave your telephone number.

Hey! Your birthday is in August!

JCA wishes you a happy birthday and many returns.

| | |
|--------------------|------------------|
| Jeff Bennett | Bill McClemon |
| Carl Brown | Irma McLean |
| Hillory Brown | Cynthia Rogers |
| Ben Campbell | Worrick Russell |
| Norma Cole | Gilbert Scott |
| Dorothy Davis | Celestine Taylor |
| Lettice Davis | Barbara Thomas |
| Enid Gough | Milton Thomson |
| Sadie Harrison | Irene Walsh |
| Peter Hutchens | Ena Wedderburn |
| Kay Inniss | Donald Wiltshire |
| Patricia Jackson | |
| Roy Johnson | |
| Avis Johnson | |
| Effie Keene-Ebanks | |
| Inez Lewis | |
| Eva LLOYD | |
| Maureen Maragh | |

paid their membership fees. Also, if you have changed your address and/or phone number, please advise us so that we can update our files.

I would like to thank all the people who have offered their encouragement and support. We will be calling on you in the future for your help as needed.

Have a great summer, and remember, do not drink and drive.

Policy changes negatively affect students

By Vincent Conville
Education Chair

The month of June has seen several policy changes initiated by Education Minister, John Snobelen and his team of advisors. First, there is the New Curriculum Guideline for grades one to eight. This new curriculum will be in place by September of 1997. Secondly, there was the announcement by the Minister that grade thirteen will definitely be eliminated by 1999.

There are many implications for our students based on these policy changes. The first, and very important one, is the fact that students will have a shorter time to learn more. We have not yet seen how the system plans to deal with slow learners and "late bloomers".

The second implication for our students is the idea of going back to streaming at the grade nine level. "Lest we forget" the streams are Basic, General and Advance. We cannot forget the large per-

centage of our Black students who ended up in the Basic programs during the sixties and seventies. These were "dead end" programs.

Black organizations, such as the JCA, must be more vigilant in helping parents decide which program best suits their children- the school should not be the only arbiter in determining student placement at the grade nine level. Parent, through their Parent Councils, must also insist that where streaming seems to be the immediate solution, students should not be locked in, but should have the option as their academic situation improve, to move up to other streams.

The Education Improvement Commission mandate states that "students come first, and meeting their needs is a priority." The Commission further states that its role is to seek equal educational opportunity for all students. The Black Community should accept no less.

Fun Summer for kids

By Heather Williams
CYFS Manager

It's summer once again and the staff of CYFS continue to be busy. Presently we are involved in many different programs, all of which are going well. Our Summer Day Camp located at Emery Collegiate is proving to be a success yet again. The campers have had the opportunity to tour JCA, and speak with the Executive Director, an activity they enjoyed immensely.

We are also involved in a partnership with Black Cap (an AIDS Education/Prevention Coalition), where Youth Educators will be hosting Aids Education Workshops to the youth in our community. This is a much needed service considering the sometimes relaxed attitude among young people around sexual activity and sexually transmitted diseases.

Another joint summer project is the work we are doing with the Trethewey community, assisting both the youth and community in taking leadership roles and building positive partnerships. We are hoping this project will be great successes. We are already seeing positive results in that community.

We continue to run our

See Kids, page 8

Fund-Raising

By Patricia Williams
Fundraising Chair

Walk-a-thon

Pledges collected to date in support of the walk-a-thon is \$3016.00. Our target is \$5000.00.

Donation

\$1000 donation to the building fund was received from Margarietta St. Juste out of the proceeds. JCA appreciates her consideration and support.

Upcoming event

A gospel concert is scheduled for Sunday September 21 at St. Michael and All Angels Church. Proceeds from this venture will go toward the JCA Building Fund.

We need volunteers to help organize this event, if this interests you, please contact Pat Williams at 667-2684

Battered women get raw deal on legal aid

By Rita McLean
Women Abuse Counsellor

He beat her up and threatened their children. She fled to a shelter. He was subsequently charged with assault, he obtained a lawyer through legal aid and was acquitted. He demanded custody of the children.

His acquittal rendered her unreliable. Consequently, in the custody case she was denied legal aid. Unable to afford a lawyer, she went to court unaided and unrepresented.

Since April 1, 1996, when legal aid was drastically reduced by the Law Society of Upper Canada, it becomes much easier for an accused criminal to get legal aid than it is for battered women and women entangled in divorce cases.

Family law certificates accounted for only 29 per cent of the 100,000 certificates available under the legal aid plan. The hours allotted are grossly insufficient with the result that 66% of the members of the Family Lawyers Association have decided that they will no longer accept legal aid clients.

Accused criminals are at risk of losing their freedom, so they must have access to lawyers for a fair trial. Therefore, the more horrible the crime, the more assured the accused is of getting legal aid. It is hard to argue with that logic, but impossible to avoid resentment when you compare the situation of the batterer with the plight of his victim and children.

The Law Society of Upper Canada set a limit of 6.5 hours for pre-trial legal work in divorce cases, with a possible extra 11.5 hours for extreme custody or access disputes. This was done apparently without consulting with the Family Lawyers Association, women's groups, shelters or the Children's Aid

Society.

According to Carol Allen, a family lawyer, who was a speaker at recent JCA workshop on Wife Assault Within The Family Unit-the Neglected Issue, "We know that we simply cannot do an effective job in that limited amount of time and especially if we need affidavits from outside witnesses or distraughted women". Therefore, mediation is a frequently suggested alternative to the courts.

Ms. Allen agreed that mediation is a feeble tool and useless in a large number of hard-core cases in which abusive husbands simply refuse to come to terms without the threat of the courts. Yet, "mediation" is sure to be proposed now that the Law Society is willing to help implement the Ontario government agenda by slashing millions of dollars from the legal aid plan.

Currently, 70 per cent of those who qualify for family legal aid are women. Men generally have the means to hire a lawyer. So who will be left in the lurch now that legal aid funds are significantly reduced? Women of course. My guess is that courts will be thrown into chaos as judges are forced to act as advocates for the unrepresented women.

The current political regime is not just taking us back to the '60's, as they have so often claimed. They are taking us back to the pre-war years, when women had no choice but to stay in viciously unhappy marriages, or to lose everything, including custody. With pay and employment

equity gone, jobs vanishing, day-care squeezed to death, poverty rates soaring and now no chance of a "day in court" for women seeking a fair divorce settlement, many women will soon be back to being barefoot and pregnant in the kitchen.

Upcoming JCA events
Seniors' Dinner Sept. 21, 1997
United Way Walk-A-Thon
Sept. 7, 1997

**JOIN THE
JCA TODAY!!
FOR COMMUNITY
FOR YOURSELF
CALL (416) 746-5772**

Caribbean- Canadian Seniors

995 Arrow Road
Tues. & Thurs.
11 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Our activities Include:
arts and crafts, choral group,
discussions, seminars and
field trips.

Come and meet people who
will treat you like family
and a friend!!

For more information

call us at

(416) 746-5772

Summer Day Camp 1997

By Marcia Panton

The 1997 Caribbean Youth & Family Services Summer Day Camp is being held at Emery Collegiate Institute. This year we have approximately 33 children in attendance. The camp is be run by four counsellors and one volunteer.

Many different activities are organized for the children to participate in and enjoy. For example, swimming twice per week, trips to historic and educational sites and academic upgrading, which include English (spelling, reading) mathematics and geography.

Each week we have a specific theme. For example, one week was Black Achievement and another was Heritage Week. The camp stresses respect and non-violence among the children. At the end of the camp, each child will be awarded a graduation certificate which will recognize his/her accomplishments.

Kids...

Continued from Page 6

Inmate Support Programs at The Metro West Detention Centre, and The Toronto Jail. Our inmate support program has proved to be a success, as many former inmates express an interest in volunteering with the organization, wanting the opportunity to give back, especially to the youth.

The staff of CYFS are looking forward to the Fall when new strategies will be adopted to move our programs and services forward.



JCA summer camp students pay a visit to the JCA

REMINDER

Keep your membership dues current. Dues are still \$20 per individual, \$30 per family.

To find out more about the JCA and member activities call

(416) 746-5772

Fun...

Continued from pg. 7

Tropicana, the Jane-Finch Concerned Citizen's Organization, and Harriet Tubman Community Organization.

If you know of any Caribbean youth who would be interested in participating, please ask them to call the JCA at (416) 746-5772.

Staff profile: Allyson Collymore

I am the new family service worker at the Caribbean Youth & Family Services/Jamaican Canadian Association. I am a social worker by profession, having earned a Bachelor of Arts in psychology and sociology (University of Toronto) and a Bachelor of Social Work (York University). I am currently working toward a Master of Social Work degree at York University.

Prior to joining the JCA, I worked for more than five years with the Municipality of Metro Toronto where I serviced diverse client groups in terms of ethno-racial background and needs, for example, youth, seniors, persons

with mental and physical disabilities. In this capacity, I provided counselling services, community development and program coordination. I have also supplemented my work experience by volunteering at agencies in Metro Toronto which service youth, the elderly and persons experiencing mental health or addiction problems. I have demonstrated and developed skills in policy analysis and program development which will be helpful in my work at the JCA.

I welcome the challenges associated with this position and view it as an opportunity to both enrich myself and to serve my community.